

Commissioners
Marisel A. Hernandez, *Chairwoman*
William J. Kresse, *Commissioner/Secretary*
Jonathan T. Swain, *Commissioner*
Lance Gough, *Executive Director*



Board of Election Commissioners for the City of Chicago
Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting
November 13, 2018, 9:30 a.m.
69 West Washington Street, 8th Floor Conference Room, Chicago, Illinois 60602

Board Members:

Marisel A. Hernandez, Chairwoman
William J. Kresse, Commissioner/Secretary
Jonathan T. Swain, Commissioner

Staff:

Lance Gough, Executive Director
Adam W. Lasker, General Counsel
Charles Holiday, Assistant Executive absent
James P. Allen, Communications Director
Bill Perez, Coordinator Hispanic Outreach
Peter Peso, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Amanda Robledo, Purchasing
Gary Ryczyn, Consultant
Trupti Patel
Geneva Morris, Videographer
Trish Sheehy

Guests:

Helene Gabelnick, League of Women Voters of Chicago (LWV Chicago)
Carol Maher
C. Betty Magness, Rainbow PUSH Coalition
Bebe Novich, Equip for Equality
JoAnn Becker
Adam L. Scheffler, Mack and Associates

- I. Call to Order: The Chairwoman called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.
- II. Roll Call all present
- III. Consideration of Agenda: Commissioner Kresse moved to defer New business item "A" [Approval of outside counsel to serve as electoral board hearing officers in relation to the February 26, 2019, municipal general election] to another meeting. Commissioner Swain seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote of the Board.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 25, 2018. Commissioner Swain moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 25, 2018. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion passed and the Minutes were approved by a 3:0 vote of the Board.

V. Executive Director's Report (Lance Gough)

Executive Director Lance Gough reported:

- Still counting November election ballots, but getting ready for mayoral elections
- We are revisiting Early Voting (EV) sites. Due to long lines at some locations, we may add more EV sites, but not necessarily more equipment. Adding more equipment to a site that's limited in space isn't going to help; we need more sites.
- There are difficulties with getting locations for EV, e.g., it is hard to get a commitment for 18 days with voting up until 7:00 at night. Mr. Gough has a list of a few potential EV sites that he's going to have looked into in the next few weeks.
- Communications Director Jim Allen stated that the turn-out for EV was nearly as high as 2008 Presidential election. The delay in voting was mostly due to in check-in stations and voting space. Some EV sites had up to 3-4 hour-long lines. Part of it is part due to the large ballots.
- Discussion was had regarding where voters vote early, near their home or near their office. Most vote at their home ward Early Voting site, many at the Supersite. We may need to better advertise that a voter may go to any Early Voting Site.
- We had 82 percent return on Vote By Mail, that's the highest that Mr. Gough remembers. One problem we are still having and need to address with the Post Office is that many of the returns were not postmarked. Others did arrive a late.
- We are going to have a debriefing in about a week. We are going to do some staff reassignment.
- The first day of filing for the 2019 Municipal General Election is November 19th. We are going to have a walk through on the lower level (pedway) for the 19th. We are setting up for the filings this weekend.

Chairwoman Hernandez: There were a lot of challenges that we faced in this election. Election Day was pretty busy, normally we would see a dip midday, but it was consistent throughout this Election Day. In spite of the issues we had, we managed to bring in the results on time with minimal issues. Our staff worked very hard: 7 days a week and 18 hours a day, 130+ core staff. They are dedicated. The Chairwoman salutes them for a job well done in spite of the issues we may have had. Thanks to Mr. Gough for guiding them, we had 80% reported before 11:00 p.m. Mr. Gough added that last year 16 people retired, this is their replacements' first election; the Mayoral election will run much smoother.

Commissioner Kresse stated that Mr. Gough and the staff did a phenomenal job.

A. Assistant Executive Director [absent]

Mr. Gough explained that Assistant Executive Director Charles Holiday was at the warehouse overseeing the 5% test recount. This was Mr. Holiday's first election serving as Assistant Executive Director. Mr. Holiday did, and is doing, an excellent job.

B. Communications Director Jim Allen

- We had a 59% turn out. The largest midterm since 1982.
- Vote by Mail was the highest ever. We had an exceptional return rate. Many Vote by Mail applicants decided to Early Vote or vote in person on election Day
- Voting by 25-34 year olds took off this time. Haven't seen that level of participation in the past.
- Fewer provisional ballots than in the past, approximately 1%, 8,000.
- Problems Election Day:
 - Particularly with the distribution of 2 ballots. We found about 38 precincts only provided the "A ballot", and voters wanted to know if they could go back and vote the "B ballot".
 - We repeatedly have problem with split precincts issuing correct ballots. We do not have the problem at Early Voting or Vote by Mail, only in-precinct.
- Not sure of Election Day same-day registration, but there were about 12,000 Grace Period registrations. Many wait until Election Day to register. Had no complaints at universities where they had a high number of same day registrations.
- Lowest turnout was the 18-24 age group. Mr. Allen explained that it is the smallest age group only 6 year range, and most transient of groups keeping their registrations up to date is more challenging. Participation was about 25-30 percent of their group
- General Counsel Adam Lasker pointed out that the University of Chicago was one of our new Early Voting sites. Universities across the country were competing in registering the most voters. University of Chicago received the most, besting Harvard.
- This is the beginning of a 2 year appointment period for Judges of Election, so we will have some retention. However, we are still accepting judge of election and election coordinator applications.

VI. Old Business

A. Infrastructure Projects and Changes in Election Administration: already discussed, will be a priority in the near future.

B. Electronic Poll Books: We had no connection issues. AT&T did an excellent

job, few other issues which were corrected.

C. Voting Equipment: will be priority after April election to be ready for 2020.

D. Legislation:

General Counsel Adam Lasker reported

- Watching ERIC/cross check and pre-trial detainee bills. There was no motion in veto session
- Thinking about next session:
 - Regarding Vote Centers, Mr. Allen thinks the first step is to get a permanent or 5 year renewable application for VBM; it exists for disabled voters and it would free up time in the application processing.
 - Agilis can update signatures after each election. Agilis can do the signature comparisons, but only if we can have signature updates.

VII. New Business

A. Approval of outside counsel to serve as electoral board hearing officers in relation to the February 26, 2019, municipal general election. [This item was deferred during Agenda Consideration – see above]

B. Approval of contract for Judge of Election Trainer George Muñoz for the 2019 municipal elections.

- Mr. Muñoz was a long term Board employee. He is semi-retired.
- We have limited recruitment at this time, but we have some more training for Judges of Election and Election Coordinators. Mr. Muñoz is the most experienced. Community Services Manager, Audra Lewicki, has said that Mr. Muñoz will be the only outside trainer. Other trainers will be staff. Commissioner Kresse has sat through Mr. Muñoz's sessions and agrees with this decision.
- Commissioner Swain made a motion to approve contract for Judge of Election Trainer George Muñoz for the 2019 municipal elections at a rate of \$65/hour not to exceed \$25,000 over the term of the contract. The term of the contract is November 13, 2018 through November 30, 2019. Commissioner Kresse seconded the motion. The motion was passed and the contract approved by unanimous vote of the Board.

C. Approval of contract modification with Cardinal Color Group for pre-election household mailings.

- Went to bid for household mailing last summer. Cardinal Color Group was the lowest bidder
- An option to extend the agreement for 2019 is in the existing agreement. We recommend that the extension option be taken with an amendment.

- Amend the contract for any pass-through of paper cost increase. It's estimated that there may be a 5% increase in paper cost, but only 2-3% would be passed through to the Board, if needed. Still lowest bid.
- Commissioner Kresse moved to approve the extension with amendment. Commissioner Swain seconded the motion. The motion was passed and the amended extension approved by a 3:0 vote of the Board.

D. Legal Report

General Counsel Adam Lasker reported:

- Election Day was pretty smooth, with only 5 precincts issued with late opening orders.
- Preparing for Electoral Board. We have more than 40 prospective Hearing Officers. About half of whom are new Electoral Board Hearing Officers. On the morning of November 29th we will have a training session for new Hearing Officers, followed by an afternoon session for all Hearing Officers.
- The initial hearings before the Hearing Officers will be on Dec 10th.
- Petition filing begins next Monday at 9:00 a.m. everyone in line by 9:00 am will be eligible for the simultaneous filing lottery.
- Filings will be accepted November 19-21; closed for Thanksgiving on the 22nd; reopen on Friday; open from 9:00 a.m. to Noon on Saturday; closed Sunday. Open Monday 9-5; those in line the last 2 hours of the last day of filing are subject to another lottery.
- Apparent conformity process. Nomination Papers are first subject to Electoral Board objections if filed, but if no objection is filed then the papers are subject to the Apparent Conformity process. We do not check for validity of signatures, just the number of signatures. Apparent Conformity will be happening in conjunction with nomination filing and objection filing.
- The Chairwoman is concerned with Thursday 11/29 Hearing Officer training, because the people may not be able to make it. Mr. Lasker stated that the weekends are filing periods. The Chairwoman wants total participation, particularly new Hearing Officers. Mr. Lasker will send a notice to all Hearing Officers and see what the response is. They do get paid for the training sessions.

VIII. Financial Report: [none]

IX. Public Comment

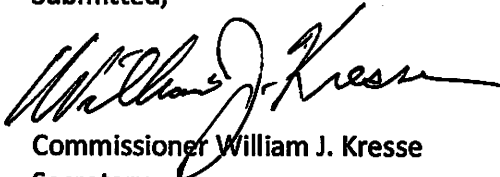
Judge of Election Carol Maher addressed the Board regarding her experiences and suggested some changes.

Helene Gabelnick speaking as a Judge of Election and not for the League of Women Voters made some suggestions regarding improvements for contacting Election Central.

X. Executive Session: None

- XI. Adjournment: Commissioner Kresse moved to adjourn the meeting until the next scheduled Regular Board Meeting on November 27th at 9:30. Commissioner Swain seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote of the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Submitted,



Commissioner William J. Kresse
Secretary